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AUTHOR Alvir, Howard P.
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ABSTRACT

This workbook presents three evaluation exercises that can be used by workshop directors to plan, implement, and evaluate workshops. The first exercise is deemed most helpful when the workshop objectives are only half-formed. Exercise 2, for cases in which workshop participants have been identified, helps the workshop director ensure that the objectives and needs analysis are relevant. Exercise 3 is designed to help pinpoint learner benefits--where learner refers to students taught by teachers participating at the workshop--after the workshop has been completed. Self-assessment criteria are presented after the exercises with which the reader may measure the effectiveness of his/her answers. (RC)

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TITLE

SELF-ASSESSMENT CRITERIA FOR WORKSHOP DIRECTORS PLANNING, CONDUCTING, OR EVALUATING TEACHER IN-SERVICE WORKSHOPS FOR STAFF DEVELOPMENT

AUTHOR

Howard P. ALVIR, Ph.D.

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27 Norwood Street
Albany, New York 12203

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December 1975

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#1 -- Preassessment instruments, participant baseline data
(TO BE USED BEFORE THE WORKSHOP)
#2 -- Ojbectives and needs assessment
(TO BE USED BEFORE THE WORKSHOP)
#3 -- Diagnostic workshop evaluation instruments
(TO BE USED AFTER THE WORKSHOP)

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INTRODUCTION

This workbook is a sequel to PLANNING AND IN-SERVICE EDUCATION (ED 088-861), AN EVALUATION SYSTEM THAT DOESN'T REQUIRE HYPER-EXPERTS (ED 092-595), EVALUATING TEACHER IN-SERVICE WORKSHOPS IN TERMS OF LEARNER BENEFITS (ED 106-272), and THIRTEEN ALTERNATIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS THAT CAN BE USED TO EVALUATE THE IMPACT OF TEACHER IN-SERVICE WORKSHOPS ON DOCUMENTED LEARNER BENEFITS (ED 107-648).

As such, this workbook gives THREE simple evaluation exercises that can be used by workshop directors to plan, implement, and evaluate any given workshop once the major workshop objectives have been developed. In cases where the objectives are only half-formed, EVALUATION ITEM #1 will be extremely helpful.

In cases where the participants have been identified, EVALUATION ITEM #2 will help the workshop director be certain that the OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS ANALYSIS is relevant.

In cases where the workshop is already over, EVALUATION ITEM #3 will help pinpoint learner benefits where learner refers to students taught by teachers particpating at the workshop.

A suggested list of SELF-ASSESSMENT CRITERIA is given in the SELF-CORRECTING ANSWER KEY.

POSTTEST

This posttest is an opportunity for workshop directors and other evaluators to self-evaluate what has been learned as a result of using this package on INSERVICE EDUCATION PROGRAM EVALUATION. The following questions are intended to be activity type evaluation questions rather than essay questions. The individual going through this posttest is requested to think of real life situations which apply the learnings acquired in this package.

After the questions, self-assessment criteria are given with which each reader may measure the effectiveness of the answer proposed.

In those questions which require the construction of an evaluation instrument, the respondent should keep the following suggestions in mind:

1. Keep all evaluation instruments simple:

   Use simple language

   Use simple directions

2. Identify rating scales clearly so that there is no doubt in the mind of the evaluator exactly what is meant by the different numbers, letters, or categories used to rate an item.

3. Vary the format and arrangement of the evaluation instrument:

   Employ some open-ended questions in order to draw out the evaluators

   Scatter checklists throughout the evaluation instrument, but do not place one checklist after another

   Use a variety of report formats such as boxes, columns, circles, checkmarks, numbers, letters, and even multiple choice in order to keep up the interest and attention of the evaluator

Don't forget that the evaluator's effort expended in moving the pencil from one format to another is a stimulus which forces most people to think clearly and accurately

4. The typical assessment instrument developed by a workshop director, whether it be a preassessment or a posttest, is usually given to a small number of individuals. Thus, techniques that are helpful and useful in mass testing programs are not always appropriate to extracting maximum information from potential participants in an inservice workshop.

DIRECTIONS: Answer the following questions each on a separate piece of paper.

POSTTEST ITEM #1

Describe briefly the nature of a specific workshop in 25 words or less.

Develop a preassessment instrument with which to determine what the learners already know, or can do, or feel about what is proposed in the workshop.

The purpose of this pre-assessment instrument is to determine baseline data on prospective participants before the workshop.

POSTTEST ITEM #2

After correcting the pre-assessment instrument developed in question 1 above with the criteria given in the answer key section, try to list specific examples of how the data gathered in the pre-assessment instrument can have an impact upon the planning, implementation, and structuring of the proposed workshop.

POSTTEST ITEM #3

For the same inservice workshop discussed in questions 1 and 2 above, develop a posttest instrument that pinpoints and evaluates what was learned as a result of the workshop.

Try to zero in on mastery of prespecified objectives and teacher competency.

The following four levels of competency may be helpful in the posttest:

LEVEL I: What is the competency that the teacher has acquired as a direct result of inservice training?

LEVEL II: What is the frequency and quality with which inservice trained teachers have exhibited the newly acquired competency in teaching and educational influence upon learners?

LEVEL III: What barriers must be removed in hostile and difficult environments in order to make sure that the newly acquired competency is able to foster greater learner success?

LEVEL IV: What evidence is available that documents the linkage between the newly acquired competency and increased levels of learner success?

Answering each of these four questions satisfies the requirements of each level of analysis.

CRITERIA FOR SELF-ASSESSING

POSTTEST ITEM #1

In general, the preassessment instrument should specify how the workshop director measures the baseline data of prospective participants before the workshop. This baseline data can include four general areas:

A. Previous exposure
B. Specific personal needs
C. Local teaching environments
D. Potential multiplier effect

A. PREVIOUS EXPOSURE PREASSESSMENT ITEMS GIVE THE PROSPECTIVE PARTICIPANT A CHANCE TO:

Answer some questions (KNOWLEDGE EVALUATION),

Document some skills (PERFORMANCE EVALUATION), and

Express values or reactions (ATTITUDE EVALUATION).

It is possible that this type of preassessment might suggest that the teacher submit a related work sample or some piece of publicity describing the teacher's impact.

B. SPECIFIC PERSONAL NEEDS ASSESSMENT ALLOWS THE PROSPECTIVE PARTICIPANT TO HAVE A CHANCE TO SUGGEST A SPECIFIC PERSONAL NEED IN LINE WITH WORKSHOP OBJECTIVES.

C. LOCAL TEACHING ENVIRONMENTS REFER TO A SPECIFICATION WHERE NECESSARY OF SUCH THINGS AS:

Teaching responsibility

Teaching schedule

Length of period

Local constraints

Individual circumstances

Available resources

This type of preassessment gives the director of the workshop a good idea of the actual teaching environment in which the prospective teacher is situated.

D. POTENTIAL MULTIPLIER EFFECT INQUIRES INTO SUCH THINGS AS HOW MANY OTHER TEACHERS LOCALLY (IN THE SAME SCHOOL OR IN NEARBY SCHOOLS) ARE TEACHING THE SAME THING IN COOPERATING TOGETHER.

There are other self-assessment criteria that can be used in looking at the preassessment instrument developed. However, the above four areas have been found to be applicable to a wide variety of inservice workshop programs.

CRITERIA FOR SELF-ASSESSMENT

POSTTEST ITEM #2

The practical worth of a preassessment instrument is in helping make decisions that improve the quality of the workshop. The following examples are related to the four assessment criteria enumerated in the previous answer. Each of these assessment criteria is herein studied from the viewpoint of typical decisions that could be made as a result of data collected.

A. PREVIOUS EXPOSURE data may help the following decisions:

If the prospective participant already knows the content of the updating workshop, why have the workshop?

One reason for the workshop may be to advance the participants from the baseline facts already possessed to more advanced content.

Another reason for the workshop may be to advance the participants from theory to practice.

In cases where the participant lacks the basic content, certain timeframes must be changed around. Instead of spending one day on the introduction, it might be necessary to spend two or three days to make sure that a secure foundation is developed before advancing to more technical topics.

B. SPECIFIC PERSONAL NEEDS data may help the workshop director individualize the workshop for the specific participants accepted.

For example, maybe the teachers already know the basic workshop information and can perform the basic workshop skills, but the same teachers need help in teaching this content to high school students.

Such an insight would enable the workshop director to choose the right teacher for the specific objective of developing appropriate teaching techniques.

C. LOCAL TEACHING ENVIRONMENTS data can help the workshop director carry on a realistic presentation.

For example, if one of the activities of the workshop is to develop a curriculum for double periods, this activity would be inappropriate if most of the teachers return to a school system where the only possibility is 45 minute periods.

If another activity of the workshop is to develop 15 minute modules, teachers returning to $2\frac{1}{2}$ hour sessions must go home with a more practical awareness than the realization that 10 fifteen minute modules equal exactly $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours. The workshop must take into account the fact that teachers in the typical $2\frac{1}{2}$ hour sessions have a number of students who arrive at different times during the normal school day. Some buses arrive $\frac{1}{2}$ hour after the majority have started class. Other buses must leave 15 minutes to a half hour before the majority finish the regular class period. Awareness of these individualizing local circumstances can make the workshop more effective.

Some worthwhile workshop activities presuppose that most teachers have greenhouses, computer terminals, bulldozers, or other exotic equipment waiting for use back home. When such resources aren't available locally, a workshop that relies too much on these non-existing tools is doomed to lack of practical value in the home school.

D. POTENTIAL MULTIPLIER EFFECT data enables the workshop director to help the largest possible number of teachers and students.

If preassessment data reveals that 5 or 6 teachers work together as a team, the teacher must decide whether it is better or not to invite more than one of these teachers.

Certain circumstances will point up the value of bringing two or three members of the same team together in a common workshop with other educators. Certain other data will point up the value of selecting only one member of the team.

The above criteria have pointed out some of the decisions that can be based upon timely, accurate, and relevant preassessment of prospective participants in an inservice workshop program. The objective of the preassessment is to obtain data upon which decisions can be based. In general, educational decisions are only as good as the data upon which the decision is made.

CRITERIA FOR SELF-ASSESSING

POSTTEST ITEM #3

The posttest used to evaluate the effectiveness of a specific inservice workshop program will vary from program to program. However, some of the following posttest items are valuable:

SAMPLE POSTTEST ITEM A:

The activity I found most beneficial was _____

_____.

because _____

_____

_____.

SAMPLE POSTTEST ITEM B:

The activity I found least beneficial was _____

_____

because _____

_____

_____.

Sample posttest items A and B are open-ended and give the participant a chance to express a wide variety of valuable specific information. The success of these open-ended items is based upon the SPECIFICITY and RELEVANCE of the comments extracted from participants.

SAMPLE POSTTEST ITEM C:

Checklists, rating scales, or other objective measuring devices should be provided to measure the mechanics of the conference such as facilities, personnel, resources, consultants, activity-by-activity analysis, logistics, and other data that is easily countable.

On such checklist devices, room should also be provided for participants and evaluators to make comments.

SAMPLE POSTTEST ITEM D:

Provision should be made to evaluate inevitable human elements in any workshop. In other words, attempts should be made to stop trouble spots that could have been avoided by more careful planning.

This includes evaluation items that identify and help eliminate:

1. Peronality conflicts or clashes between staff and participants.
2. Activities that are really nothing but slight variations of the lecture method.
3. Presentations that give too much technical information either to inundate participants with facts and figures that can't be used or to show off the qualifications of the celebrated consultant.
4. Any activity or program component that does not manifest a visible potential value for carryover into the classroom.

Obviously, the sample posttest items given above are not the only ones available. These samples have been given to cover typical items of interest to participants in inservice workshop programs.

It is obvious that for certain subject matter, skills, or values, a specific workshop may have provided either not enough time or too much time. This is due to the typical tendency in a five day workshop to cover a different topic each day whereas in reality three days might be required for topic A while a half day each for the rest of the four topics would be sufficient.

An example of this is found in the typical curriculum construction workshop wherein three days might be necessary to fully implement operational objectives upon which the rest of the curriculum package would depend.

It must be remembered that the objectives of a posttest include more than gathering applause for a good job well done. In the last mentioned example, it is obvious that the task of a posttest is to pinpoint specific errors that can be corrected and remedied in the future.